



**Faculty Senate  
Minutes  
Monday, August 25, 2025  
4:00 – 5:30 PM, Waterman Memorial Lounge**

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The meeting was called to order by Faculty Senate President Abigail McGowan at 4:01 PM

**Senators in Attendance: 69**

**Absent: 11 Senators:** Anesthesiology Rep1(Hoeft), CAC Chair (Everse), Emergency Medicine Rep1 (Schlein), Emergency Medicine Rep2 (Pellet), Mathematics & Statistics Rep2 (vacant), Medicine Rep2 (vacant), Physics (White), PSC Chair (Benson), Radiology Rep1 (vacant), School of the Arts Rep1 (vacant), School of the Arts Rep2 (vacant), Surgery Rep1 (vacant)

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**1. Faculty Senate President's Welcome Remarks** – Abigail McGowan made the following remarks:

- Abby accepted the Faculty Senate President role to be at the table during national and UVM changes, which offer strategic planning opportunities.
- Together with Senate VP Amy Trubeck, they aim to engage faculty senators in conversation and improve communication back to their units. To achieve this, they will:
  - Limit Senate presentations to 5 minutes followed by conversation.
  - Ask presenters to come with questions for the Senate to address.
  - Collect electronic feedback to increase the number of voices heard.
  - The Executive Council will set the Senate agenda, with time allocated for hot-button topics submitted by the membership.
  - Much of the work happens in the Senate standing committees, and Abby will ensure committee work is communicated to the full Senate.
  - Abby will explore ways to help senators represent their departments effectively. Shortly after Senate meetings, senators will receive a summary and question to engage their faculty and bring back to the Senate.
- A call for nominations for faculty representatives on a new Strategic Planning Committee will be distributed by email today. Faculty from each academic unit will vote to elect a representative.

**2. Orientation to the Faculty Senate.** Abigail McGowan provided an overview of the structure of the Faculty Senate, including the mission and function, membership, the

roles and responsibilities of senators, and the process for establishing the senate agenda. In addition, President McGowan provided an overview of the responsibilities of the eight standing committees, which are authorized to act for and in the name of the Faculty Senate. The work of the senate committees will come to the Senate in a report, or an action requiring discussion and vote. Presentation slides are attached to these minutes.

3. **Approval of Minutes** – The minutes of the May 2025 Senate meeting were approved as written. **Vote: 54 approve**, 0 oppose, 8 abstain. The motion carried.

4. **Degree Conferrals**

It was moved, seconded and voted that the following numbers of graduates be recommended by the Senate to the President for the awarding of the appropriate degrees or certificates as authorized by the Board of Trustees. Individual names of the graduates will be recorded with the minutes of this meeting in the permanent Senate records.

Degrees:

- Agriculture and Life Sciences (17)
- Arts and Sciences (58 Bachelor of Arts, 8 Bachelor of Science)
- Education and Social Services (7)
- Engineering and Mathematical Sciences (16)
- Graduate College (121)
- Grossman School of Business (13)
- Nursing and Health Sciences (2)
- Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources (14)

**Vote: 62 approved**, 0 opposed, 1 abstained. The motion carried.

5. **Changes to the Prism Center** – Abigail McGowan introduced a discussion regarding the announcement that as of July 1, 2025, the new Prism Intercultural Center would serve as an umbrella organization for various centers and programs including the Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) Center, the Prism Center, which serves lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer students, and a new Men and Masculinities program. The intent of this move was to create more cohesion, clarity, and to work across the spectrum of gender identity and sexual orientation, as well as to elevate and expand UVM's work on programs and services for men and masculine identified people. In response to these changes, some faculty raised concern, and a petition was launched over the summer to protest the changes. President McGowan invited Vice Provost for Intercultural Excellence Amer F. Ahmed, Senior Director of Intercultural Centers & Director of the Interfaith Center Rev. Dr. James D. Ross II, and three faculty members with concerns about the changes to provide more information on the rationale and concerns.

Reverend Dr. James Ross shared that the new umbrella organization, Prism Intercultural Center, will better serve UVM students, streamline administration, and ensure consistency in work. It also elevates the current work on men and masculine identities

to a program status, providing a cohesive approach to gender sexuality and gender identity. This change will offer various services to all students. Dr. Amer Ahmed discussed external factors and dynamics in the federal landscape, emphasizing the need for proactive action to ensure the Division of Intercultural Excellence continues to serve UVM students.

Three faculty members, Valerie Rohy, Professor and Acting Chair of the English Department, Ellen Anderson, Associate Professor of Political Science, Jeanne Shea, Associate Professor of Anthropology spoke as faculty who teach and advise students. Concerns include the effect on the safety of students, the name chosen for the umbrella organization, and the process for the decision to reorganize. Faculty expressed worry that the change may signal a lack of support for LGBTQ students amidst national attacks, a bad faith effort to protect the university from political reprisal, or a lack of commitment to equity and inclusion. They asked that the administration revisit the decision with a transparent process involving LGBTQ students and faculty.

Discussion topics from the floor included the desire for students and faculty to be involved in the process, confusion about the name change, clarification on the rationale for the change and the potential advisory role for the Faculty Senate regarding the decision to change. Rev. Dr. James Ross is putting together an advisory committee for the new Prism Intercultural Center. Faculty interested in serving should contact James.Ross@uvm.edu.

**6. Reports that do not require a Senate vote:**

- a) Faculty Senate letter to President Marlene Tromp. This summary of feedback, collected at the March 2025 Faculty Senate meeting, was compiled by Past Faculty Senate President Thomas Borchert.

7. **New Business** - none

8. **Old Business** - none

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 PM

# Orientation

- Mission and Function
- Partners in Shared Governance
- Structure of the Faculty Senate
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Processes/Procedures
- Questions and Discussion

# Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws

## PREAMBLE

The administration and the Faculty Senate of the University of Vermont share responsibility for the effective management of the academic affairs of the University. Authority in matters related to the academic mission of the University is vested in the faculty by the Board of Trustees.

This authority is exercised in the Faculty Senate by elected senators with voting privileges and by committees authorized to act on their behalf. Meetings of the Faculty Senate are presided over by a President and Vice-President and follow

a town-meeting format at which all University faculty members have a voice. The activities of the Senate are overseen by an Executive Council.

**CBL Last revised:** October 2001.

*Approved by the Faculty Senate November 19, 2001. Approved by the Board of Trustees February 23, 2002. **Amended:** May 1, 2006; March 14, 2011; April 23, 2012; February 13, 2014; November 12, 2015; December 23, 2015; April 9, 2021; February 24, 2025*



# Mission & Function of the Faculty Senate

Under the authority of the Board of Trustees the University of Vermont Faculty Senate is empowered:

**1.1** To review and establish policy with respect to the following matters: all curricular matters, research and scholarship, Admissions standards and prerequisites, requirements for academic certificates and degree programs, regulations regarding attendance, examinations, grading, scholastic standing, and honors, teaching quality, professional standards and criteria for positions

accorded academic rank.

**1.2** To review, to recommend, and to participate in the formulation of policy with regard to: institutional priorities; allocation and utilization of the University's resources; the establishment or elimination of colleges and departments; faculty appointment, promotion, tenure, dismissal, leaves, and economic benefits; admission procedures and quotas; student financial aid.

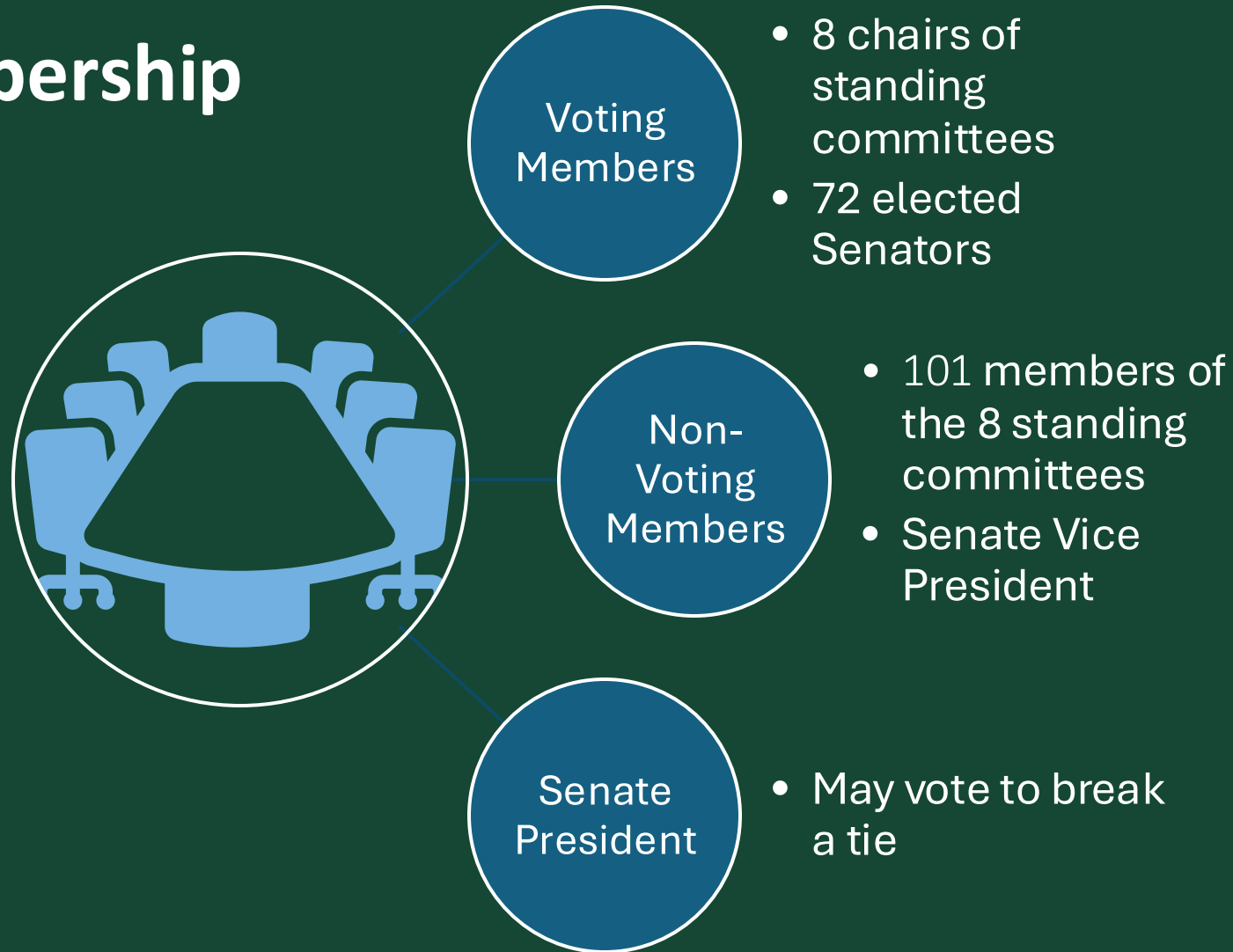
# Partners in Shared Governance

- The **administration**, led by the president and the senior vice president/provost, and the **Faculty Senate** share responsibility in managing the university's academic affairs.
- The **Staff Council** works with the administration on issues and policies

that affect university staff.

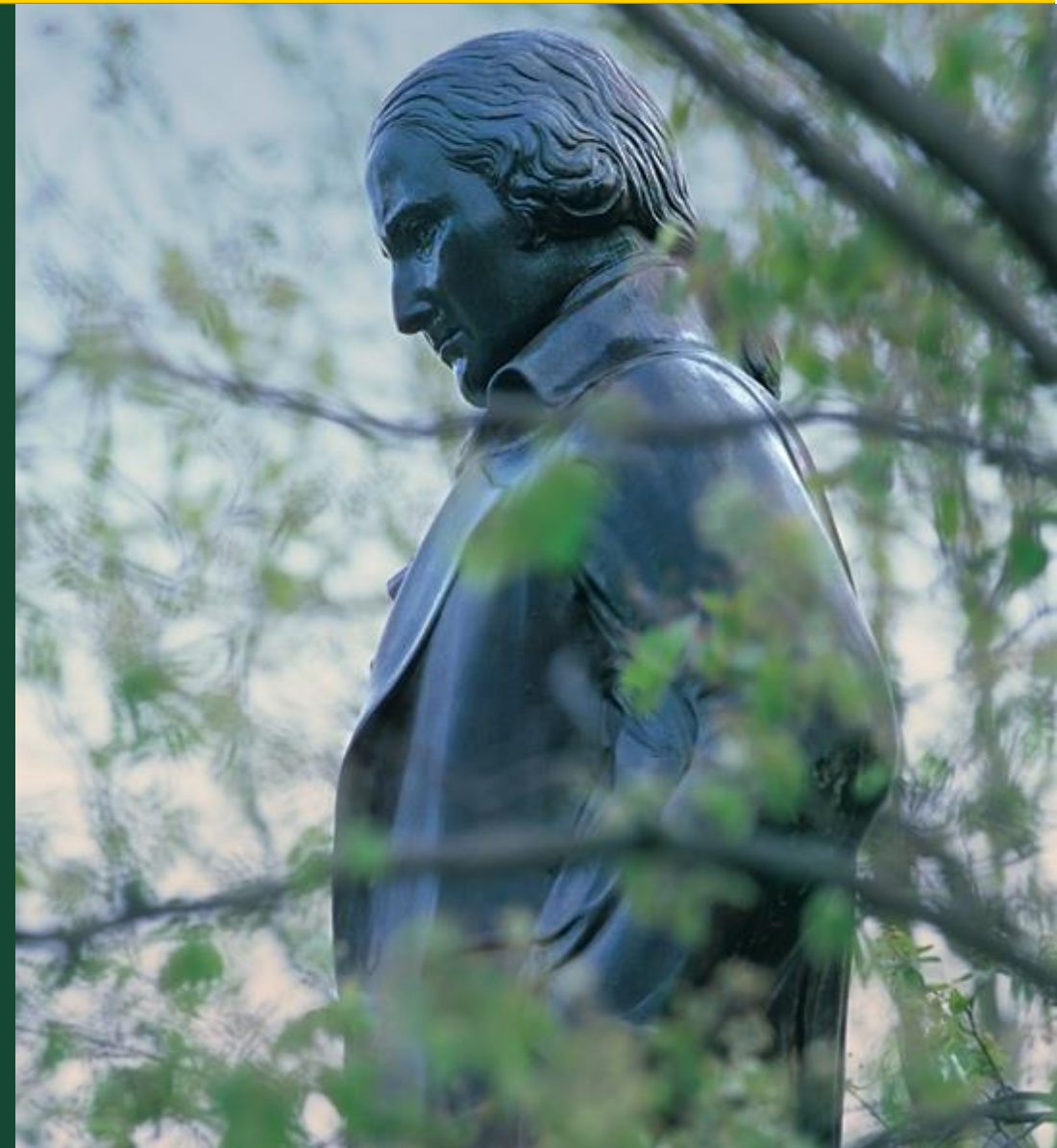
- The **Student Government Association** and **Graduate Student Senate** also play advisory roles to the administration, as well as recognizing student clubs and organizations and allocating funding.

# Senate Membership



# Senator Roles & Responsibilities

- Review meeting materials
- Attend, participate in discussion, vote
- Send a delegate
- Represent your unit
- Report actions pending and completed
- Adhere to Our Common Ground



# Role of the Faculty Senate President

- Preside at meetings of the Faculty Senate
- Serve as the Faculty's spokesperson and consult with the administration, the Staff Council, the student body, the Board of Trustees, and the extra-university community on matters within the jurisdiction of the Senate



# Faculty Senate Website & SharePoint & Teams

Website = Public Information

SharePoint = Internal UVM information

Teams = Committee Working Files



# Faculty Senate Committee Membership

Standing committees are authorized to act for and in the name of the Senate. There are eight standing committees of the Faculty Senate.

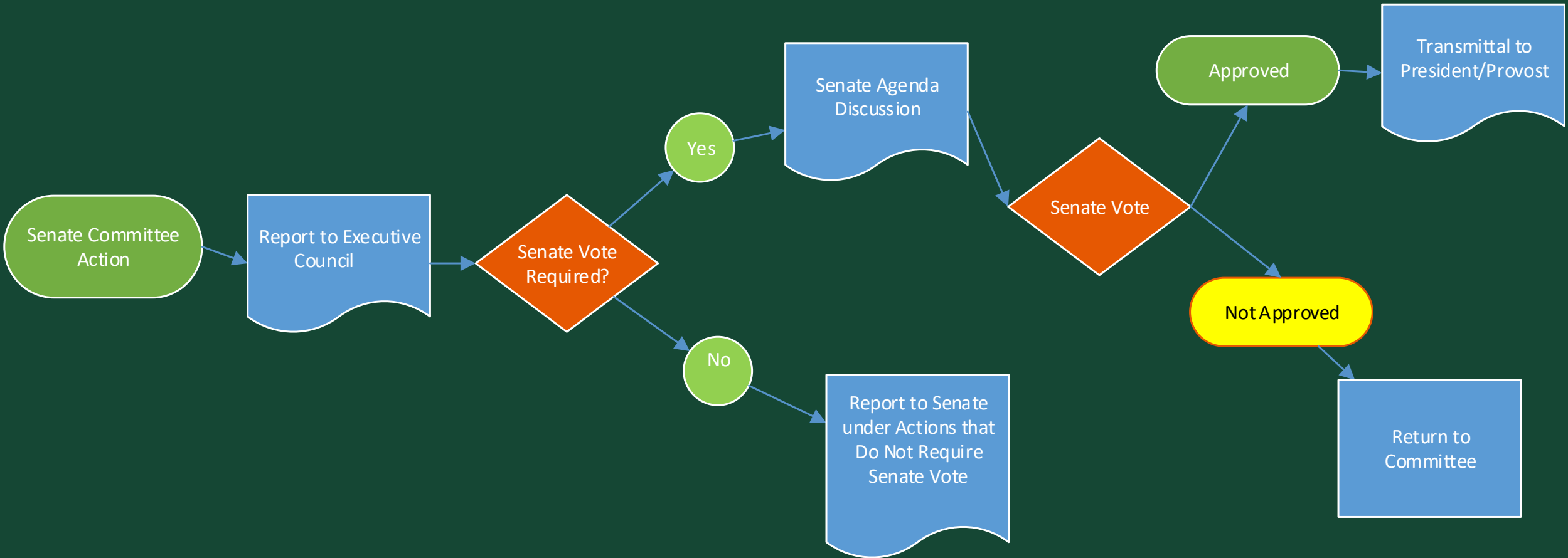
Membership:

- At least one member from each College/School/Libraries elected for a 3-year term
- Units with more than 200 full-time eligible

faculty may elect one additional member to each standing committee

- The Curricular Affairs Committee has double the number of members
- Standing committee members are non-voting member of the Faculty Senate unless also serving as an elected senator or chair of a standing committee.

# Senate Committee Action



President & VP

8 Chairs of  
Standing  
Committees

Executive  
Council

Immediate Past  
President &  
President-Elect

4 elected Members  
At Large

# Faculty Senate Executive Council

## Chairs of the 8 Standing Committees

Curricular Affairs – Co-Chairs Colby Kervick & Stephen Everse

Catamount Core Curriculum Committee – Chair Kat Scollins

Educational & Research Technologies – Chair Helen Read

Faculty Affairs Committee - pending

Financial & Physical Planning – Chair Guillermo Rodriguez

Professional Standards – Chair Daisy Benson

Research, Scholarship & the Creative Arts – Chair Bikki Tran  
Smith

Student Affairs – Chair Jennifer Prue

## 4 Members At Large

### *Elected by Senators*

Brian Beckage (2024-2026)

Colby Kervick (2024-2026)

Julia Perdrial (2025-2027)

Kenneth Allen (2025-2027)

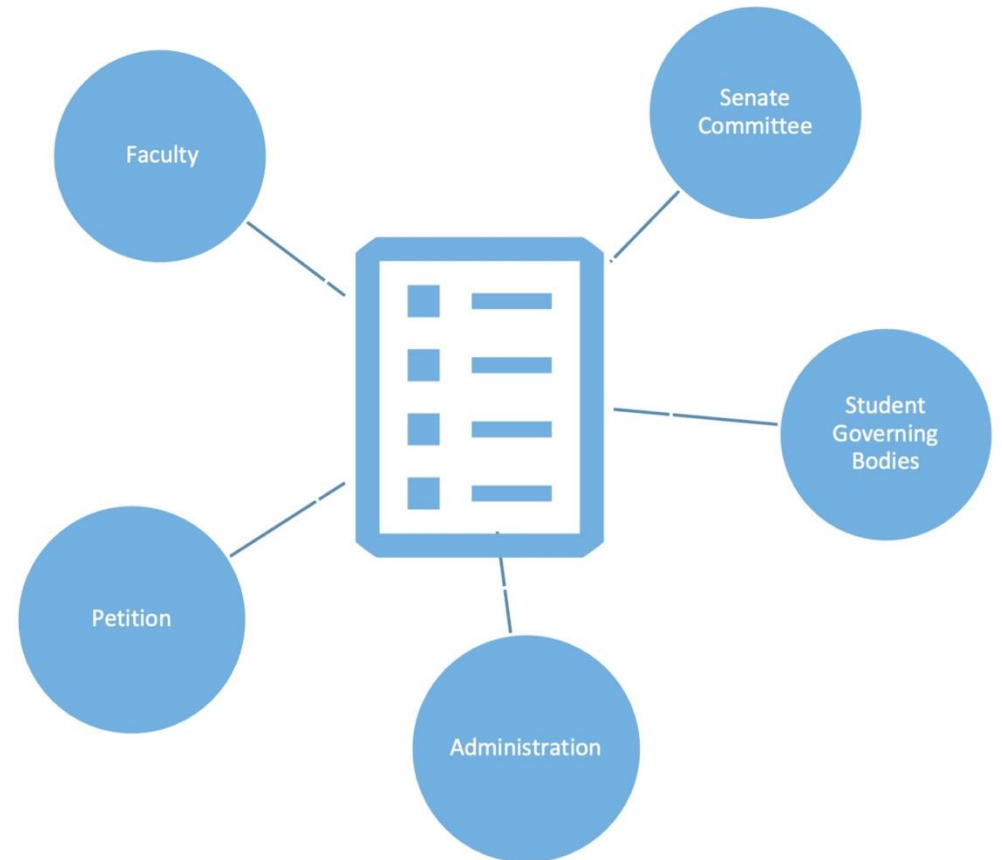
## President & Vice President

Abigail McGowan, President

Amy Trubek, Vice President

# Faculty Senate Agenda

The Executive Council prepares the agenda from proposals submitted from Faculty, Senate Committees, Student Governing bodies, Administration, or by Petition





Quorum for warned motions = 41 of the 80 voting members must be present (the majority of voting members)



Quorum for unwarned motions = 60 of the 80 voting members must be present ( $\frac{3}{4}$  of the voting members)



A motion is approved if a quorum is present, and a majority of those voting approve the proposal.